

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

The below listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

Claim 1 (Cancelled)

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A boat having enhanced stability, safety and comfort, comprising:

a single hull unit having at least one elongated, substantially vertical slot extending substantially therethrough such that said slot divides said single hull unit into at least two substantially separate buoyant compartments, and such that water, on which the boat is floating, freely communicates with said slot and with air within and surrounding said slot;

wherein said slot is fully or partly open at at least a bow or a stern or a port side or a starboard side of said single hull unit;

wherein said slot is closed at its top;

wherein said single hull unit has a single bow portion substantially at a centerline of said single hull unit; [[and]]

wherein said substantially vertical slot has a cross sectional area such that a vertical dimension of said cross sectional area of said slot is substantially greater than a horizontal dimension of said cross sectional area of said slot and

wherein said single hull unit is a single, partly submerged hull of a mono hull vessel, or any single one of two individually partly submerged hulls of a catamaran, or any single one of multiple individually partly submerged hulls of a multi-hulled vessel.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 2, wherein said slot extends longitudinally through said single hull unit,

wherein said slot runs through at least most of the length of said single hull unit.

Claim 4 (Cancelled)

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A boat having enhanced stability, safety and comfort, comprising:

a single hull unit having at least one elongated, substantially vertical slot extending substantially therethrough such that said slot divides said single hull unit into at least two substantially separate side-by-side buoyant compartments and such that water, on which said boat is floating, freely communicates with said slot and with air within and surrounding said slot; wherein said slot is fully or partly open at a stern and closed at a bow of said single hull unit, or said slot is fully or partly closed at a stern and open at a bow of said single hull unit;

wherein said slot is closed at its top;

wherein said single hull unit has a single bow portion substantially at a centerline of said single hull unit; [[and]]

wherein said substantially vertical slot has a cross sectional area such that a vertical dimension of said cross sectional area of said slot is substantially greater than a horizontal dimension of said cross sectional area of said slot and

wherein said single hull unit is a single, partly submerged hull of a mono hull vessel, or any single one of two individually partly submerged hulls of a catamaran, or any single one of multiple individually partly submerged hulls of a multi-hulled vessel.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 2, wherein said slot is open on a bottom of said single hull unit.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 2, wherein said slot is closed on a bottom of said single hull unit.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A boat having enhanced stability, safety and comfort, comprising:

a single hull unit having at least one elongated, substantially vertical slot extending approximately the length of said single hull unit such that said slot divides said single hull unit into at least two substantially separate side-by-side buoyant compartments, and such that water, on which the boat is floating, freely communicates with said slot and with air within and surrounding said slot; wherein said slot is closed at a bow and at a stern of said single hull unit;

wherein said single hull unit has a single bow portion substantially at a centerline of said single hull unit and

wherein said substantially vertical slot has a cross sectional area such that a vertical dimension of said cross sectional area of said slot is substantially greater than a horizontal dimension of said cross sectional area of said slot.

Claim 9 (Original): The boat of claim 2, wherein an air vent is communicated with said slot.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 2, wherein said slot is intermittently open on its bottom.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 2, wherein said slot extends upwardly to a location above the waterline of said boat, such that said slot is simultaneously above and below said waterline.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 3, wherein said slot extends substantially along a longitudinal centerline of said single hull unit.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 2, wherein said slot extends longitudinally or transversely through said single hull unit substantially along a longitudinal or

transverse centerline thereof, and is fully or partly open on a stern, and on either a bow or a bottom of said single hull unit, and wherein said slot extends upwardly to a location above the waterline of said single hull unit such that said slot is simultaneously above and below said waterline.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 2, wherein multiple centers of buoyancy are created, at least one each on opposing sides of said slot.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A boat having enhanced stability, safety and comfort, comprising:

a single hull unit having at least one elongated, substantially vertical slot extending substantially ~~therethrough~~ there across such that the lengthwise dimension of said slot divides said single hull unit into at least two substantially separate fore-and-aft buoyant compartments, and such that water, on which said boat is floating, freely communicates with said slot and with air within and surrounding said slot;

wherein said slot extends transversely ~~through~~ across at least most of the width of said single hull unit;

wherein said single hull unit has a single bow portion substantially at a centerline of said single hull unit;

wherein said slot is fully or partly open at at least a port side or a starboard side of said single hull unit, or at a bottom of said slot; [[and]]

wherein said transverse slot has its own intrinsic vertical, transverse and lengthwise dimensions such that the transverse slot has substantially greater lengths in the transverse and vertical dimensions, than in the lengthwise dimension; extends in its own lengthwise dimension, along the transverse dimension of the boat hull and wherein said ~~substantially vertical~~ transverse slot has a cross sectional area such that a vertical dimension of said cross sectional area of said slot is substantially greater than a horizontal dimension of said cross sectional area of said transverse slot and

wherein said single hull unit is a single, partly submerged hull of a mono hull vessel, or any single one of two individually partly submerged hulls of a catamaran, or any single one of multiple individually partly submerged hulls of a multi-hulled vessel.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 15, wherein said slot is angled.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 15, wherein said boat has two hull units and is a catamaran, and wherein one hull unit of said two hull units of the catamaran has a transverse slot extending substantially therethrough.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 15, wherein said boat has three hull units and is a trimaran, and wherein one hull unit of said three hull units of the trimaran has a transverse slot extending substantially therethrough.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 15, further comprising a second slot, wherein said second slot extends longitudinally through said single hull unit.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 2, wherein said single hull unit includes a plurality of elongated slots extending longitudinally or transversely therethrough.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 20, wherein said single hull unit includes 3 elongated slots extending longitudinally therethrough, and wherein one of said 3 slots extends substantially along a centerline of said single hull unit.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 15, wherein multiple centers of buoyancy are created, at least one each on opposing sides of said slot.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 2, wherein said single hull unit is the hull unit of a submarine vessel.

Claim 24 (Cancelled)

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): The boat of claim 2, wherein the width of said slot is substantially constant along its length.

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Claim 26 (Previously Presented): The boat of claim 15, wherein said slot extends transversely through said single hull unit, and is fully or partly open at a bottom of said slot and wherein said slot extends upwardly to a location above the waterline of said single hull unit such that said slot is simultaneously above and below said waterline.